

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL
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SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK W. BERGMAN
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
COMMANDER, MARINE FORCES RESERVE
BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
– GUARD AND RESERVES –
ON
MARCH 25, 2009**

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THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Chairman Nelson, Senator Graham, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it is my honor to report to you on the state of your Marine Corps Reserve.

I am pleased to report that your Marine Corps Reserve continues to equip and train the best and brightest of our Nation's sons and daughters. In an environment where the Marine Corps continues to rapidly adapt to broad strategic conditions and wide-ranging threats, your Marine Corps Reserve - a primarily Operational Reserve - continues to meet all challenges and commitments. Whether in Iraq today, Afghanistan tomorrow or in subsequent campaigns, your Marine Corps Reserve continues to answer the clarion call to arms in defense of this great Nation.

On behalf of all our Marines, sailors and their families, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Subcommittee for its continuing support. The support of Congress and the American people reveal both a commitment to ensure the common defense and a genuine concern for the welfare of our Marines, sailors and their families.

I. TODAY'S MARINE CORPS RESERVE

Your Marine Corps Reserve continues to be fully capable of war fighting excellence. As a vested partner in the Total Force Marine Corps, we faithfully continue our steadfast commitment to provide Reserve units and personnel who stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their Active Component counterparts in all contingencies, operations and exercises.

As of March 3, 2009, 52,369 Reserve Marines and approximately 99 percent of U.S. Marine Corps Reserve units were activated since 9/11 - 98 percent of our activated units deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

Today's Marine Corps Reserve is characterized by a strong resolve that enables us to sustain the current operational pace during the longest mobilization period in our Nation's history. However, to continue this unprecedented pace will require adequate funding. Without the total funding, currently provided through baseline and supplemental processes, we would be unable to maintain a truly Operational Reserve.

The Force Generation Model, implemented in October 2006, continues to provide predictability of future activation and deployment schedules for our Marines and sailors. The predictability the Model provides has been well received by our Marines, sailors and employers. The Model provides our Reservists the opportunity to effectively plan their lives throughout their

Reserve contractual agreement, enabling them to creatively strike a successful balance between family, civilian career and service to community, country and Corps. I am happy to report that we recently activated the fifth rotation based upon the Model to Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom (OIF and OEF) with 5,500 Marines being activated and deployed during Fiscal Year 2008. Additionally, we have activated approximately 2,500 more Marines during the timeframe November 2008 to February 2009.

The Force Generation Model continues to assist Service and Joint Force planners in maintaining a consistent flow of fully capable Marine Corps Reserve units. This steady flow of Reserve units is essential in enabling our Active Component to reach a 1:2 dwell time. The Model, based on one-year activation to four-plus years in a non-activated status, continues to be both supportable and sustainable. Predictable activation dates permit unit commanders to focus training on core mission capabilities early in the dwell period; and then train to specific OIF and OEF mission tasks once the unit is within twelve to eighteen months of activation. Additionally, the amount of cross-leveling has been significantly reduced. With each subsequent rotation, the requirement to cross-level continues to decrease. For example, the upcoming activation of the St. Louis, Missouri-based 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, will require minimal cross-leveling of enlisted personnel.

We believe the full benefit of the Force Generation Model will begin to be realized once we have completed a full cycle of nine rotations and the Active Component reaches the authorized end strength of 202,000. A very important byproduct of the Force Generation Model will be our emerging ability to more accurately budget for training and equipment requirements during the five year dwell time.

In addition to the 5,500 Marines activated and deployed during Fiscal Year 2008 in support of OIF and OEF, we deployed an additional 3,300 Marines worldwide in support of joint and/or combined Theater Security Cooperation Exercises. In each of the past three years, between OIF, OEF, Theater Security Cooperation Exercises, and recently emerging security cooperation mobile training teams that conduct Phase-0 operations, nearly one-third of our force has deployed outside the continental United States both in an activated and non-activated status.

During this past year, more than 3,300 Marines from Fourth Marine Division have served in Iraq. Included are two infantry battalions, as well as armor, reconnaissance, combat engineer, military police, and truck units. Of particular note, the El Paso, Texas-based Battery D, 2nd

Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, became the second Marine Corps High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) unit to be deployed. Another highlight was the success of New Orleans, Louisiana-based 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, in al-Anbar Province. This infantry battalion, with companies in Louisiana and Texas, played a key role in the redevelopment of the Haditha K3 Oil Refinery and transport of crude oil in al-Anbar Province. Their efforts, spurred primarily by several of the battalion's Marines who are consultants and executives within the US oil and energy industry, resulted in the successful rail transport of crude oil into Anbar and restart of the oil refinery by July 2008, several years after the refinery and rail system had ceased to operate. Also of note was the ability and flexibility of the Division units to train for and conduct "in lieu of" or provisional missions due to changing operational requirements in OIF/OEF.

Fourth Marine Division also deployed two of its regimental headquarters in the role of Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF) command elements. Kansas City, Missouri-based 24th Marine Regiment deployed as a Special Purpose MAGTF to U.S. Southern Command to support the new Partnership of the Americas series of small combined Theater Security Cooperation Exercises in South America. The San Bruno, California-based 23rd Marine Regiment led a combined joint regimental headquarters in support of exercise African Lion in Morocco as well as a combined joint battalion headquarters in support of Exercise Shared Accord in Ghana. These three exercises alone incorporated the deployment of more than 1,100 Marines from across Marine Forces Reserve. Fourth Marine Division also conducted training to assist our allies in foreign militaries from Korea to the Republic of Georgia. Calendar Year 2009 will be a busy year for the Division as they conduct training in Benin, Brunei, Ukraine, the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Brazil, Guatemala and Guyana. Returning to exercises in Morocco and Australia and supporting the 50th anniversary of UNITAS Gold with a command element from 24th Marine Regiment will be key engagements. From May through August 2009, an activated Reserve reinforced rifle company from the 24th Marine Regiment and a composite platoon of Marines from the 4th Amphibious Armored Battalion, in partnership with the US Navy, will conduct training and exercises in Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines during exercise Cooperation and Readiness Afloat Training (CARAT).

Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing has continued to provide essential exercise support and pre-deployment training normally provided by Active Component squadrons. The Marine Corps'

premier pre-deployment training exercise, Mojave Viper, received a majority of air support from our fixed wing and helicopter squadrons. Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing deployed Mt. Clemens, Michigan-based, Marine Wing Support Squadron 471 as a Provisional Security Company to Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa, provided a truck platoon to support combat operations for the Active Component's 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment in Iraq, and sourced multiple Marine Air Control detachments from Chicago, Illinois-based Marine Air Control Group 48. Marine Transport Squadron Belle Chasse (Louisiana) Detachment is currently in theater with the UC-35 Citation Encore aircraft providing critical Operational Support Airlift capability to U.S. Central Command.

Additionally, Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing has participated in multiple combined, bi-lateral and joint exercises in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. Humanitarian Assistance construction projects were conducted in Trinidad-Tobago, Peru, and Honduras. Participation in these exercises includes support of U.S. and Marine Corps forces and facilitates training and interoperability with our allies. For example, African Lion participation enabled the Moroccan Air Force to develop better close air support and aerial refueling techniques.

Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing continues to be an integral partner in the Marine Corps Aviation Transition Strategy. In the near term, transition from legacy to leap-ahead aviation capabilities (i.e. MV-22, UH-1Y, AH-1Z and JSF) in the Active Component required a transfer of certain Reserve Component aviation manpower, airframes and support structure to the Active Component Marine Corps. As a result, two Reserve Fighter/Attack F/A-18 squadrons were placed in cadre status and a Light Attack UH-1N/AH-1W helicopter squadron, a Heavy Lift CH-53E helicopter squadron, an Aviation Logistics Squadron and two of four Marine Aircraft Group Headquarters were decommissioned. A second Heavy Lift CH-53E helicopter squadron has been reduced in size. As the Active Component transitions to the new airframes, Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing has assumed the Fleet Replacement Squadron role for the legacy model KC-130s, UH-1s, and AH-1s. Additionally, as part of the Aviation Transition Strategy, two Tactical Air Command Center Augmentation Units were commissioned. To complete the Aviation Transition Plan, beginning in 2014, Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing will begin transitioning to the new airframes and Command and Control (C2) capabilities.

Fourth Marine Logistics Group continues to provide fully capable units, detachments and individuals prepared to deliver sustained tactical logistics support. In the past year, Fourth Marine

Logistics Group provided approximately 1,300 Marines and sailors from across the spectrum of combat service support to augment the Active Component's 1st and 2nd Marine Logistics Groups engaged in OIF. In addition to the requirements of the Force Generation Model, Fourth Marine Logistics Group provided additional support to OIF by sourcing 265 Marines to staff the al-Taquaddam Security Force and to OEF by sourcing 279 Marines from the Portland, Oregon-based 6th Engineer Support Battalion to staff Provisional Security Company 8 at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa.

Increased augmentation in support of OIF/OEF will include a complete Combat Logistics Battalion (CLB-46) formed with more than 800 Marines and sailors from across Fourth Marine Logistics Group's nine battalions. Combat Logistics Battalion 46 will provide tactical level logistics support to a Marine Regimental Combat Team in al-Anbar Province, Iraq. This will be the first CLB formed and deployed by Fourth Marine Logistics Group.

Continuing to aggressively support overseas joint and combined exercises, training, and other events in support of the Combatant Commanders' Phase-0 operations, Fourth Marine Logistics Group participated in 29 overseas events spread across all of the Unified Commands, ranging in size from exercises involving 75 Marines down to 3-person Traveling Country Teams that conducted engagement with foreign militaries. Olympic Thrust in June 2008 began the preparation of Fourth Marine Logistics Group's battalions' staffs to form the nucleus of a CLB headquarters. Exercise Javelin Thrust (June 2009) will be a capstone preparation event for CLB-46.

Fourth Marine Logistics Group has taken the lead on coordinating Marine Forces Reserve's participation in Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program events. The purpose of the IRT program is to provide civic assistance projects in the United States, possessions and territories while simultaneously improving military readiness. Fourth Marine Logistics Group has initiated and conducted IRT planning during the last year and will execute two events in Alaska and one event in the Marianas Islands during 2009. These events will focus on infrastructure improvements and medical/dental assistance projects.

In addition to ground, aviation, and logistic elements, Marine Forces Reserve has provided civil affairs capabilities since the start of OIF. Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Detachments from Marine Forces Reserve have augmented the supported Marine Air Ground Task Forces and adjacent commands with air/ground fires liaison elements. Marine Forces Reserve also continues to provide

intelligence augmentation, to include Human Exploitation Teams, Sensor Employment Teams, and Intelligence Production Teams.

The trend in recent years toward increased participation of Marines in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) continued in FY-08. During the fiscal year, the Marine Corps Mobilization Command (MOBCOM) mustered more than 1,500 Marines from the IRR to screen and prepare them for activation. More than 1,500 sets of mobilization orders were issued with a total of 1,002 IRR Marines reporting for activation during FY-08. MOBCOM also processed more than 8,100 sets of shorter duration active duty orders for IRR Marines during FY-08. We have expanded our family programs to reach out to the families of our deployed IRR Marines, using local Peacetime/Wartime Support Teams as well as MOBCOM assets. With the advent of Yellow Ribbon Legislation, we continue to develop programs to better support our deploying and returning Marines and their families.

MOBCOM modified its IRR muster program during 2008, from large scale metropolitan musters to a combination of large scale musters and smaller, more personalized musters at Reserve sites. We completed the fiscal year screening of approximately 11,000 of the 55,000 Marines in our IRR population. Our screening effectiveness continues to rise as we continue to develop better communication methods with our IRR population. For example, MOBCOM contacted and engaged the IRR Marines through email, letter correspondence and telephone calls. Higher quality communications keeps our Marines better informed and prolongs their connection with each other and our Corps. We believe that these longer-term connections will be critical as we truly seek to create the Continuum of Service necessary to support a sustainable Operational Reserve.

The Marine Corps Reserve's continuing augmentation and reinforcement of the Active Component is not without cost. Continuing activations and high Reserve operational tempo highlight personnel challenges in select military occupational specialties and significant strain on Reserve equipment.

II. PERSONNEL

The Selected Marine Corps Reserve is comprised of Reserve unit Marines, Active Reserve Marines, Individual Mobilization Augmentees, and Reserve Marines in the training pipeline, which when added together, form the inventory of the end strength in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve.

END STRENGTH

Although we continue to benefit from strong volunteerism of our Reserve Marines, a degradation in our ability to achieve authorized end strength has occurred. Fiscal Years 2002 to 2005 had percentages of authorized end strength above 100 percent and Fiscal Year 2006 percentage of authorized end strength at 99.71 percent. Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008 percentages of authorized end strength were at 97.36 and 94.76 percent - shortfalls of 1,044 and 2,077 Marines respectively. This resulted in the only fiscal years since 9/11 that the Selected Marine Corps Reserve fell below the Title 10-allowable three percent variance from authorization.

As previously stated in my testimonies before the House and Senate Appropriations Committees' Subcommittees on Defense during 2008, we anticipated an adverse affect on meeting an acceptable percentage of authorized Marine Corps Selected Reserve end strength as greater numbers of Reserve Component Marines volunteered for full-time active duty due to the Marine Corps' accelerated build to a 202,000 Active Component Marine Corps.

During the past fiscal year, we accepted the short-term risk in our ability to obtain our Selected Marine Corps Reserve Component end strength of 39,600 as the Reserve accession plans were adjusted and our experienced and combat tested Reserve Marines were encouraged to transition back to active duty to support the build effort, and they responded in force: From 2007 to present, approximately 1,946 Reserve Marines returned to, or are awaiting return to, active duty.

The fact is that the Active Component Marine Corps will continue to rely heavily upon augmentation and reinforcement provided by our Reserve Marines. I firmly believe our authorized end strength of 39,600 is still highly relevant and appropriate, and will consequently drive recruiting and retention. This number provides us with the Marines we require to support the Force and to achieve our goal of a 1:5 deployment-to-dwell ratio in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve.

Additionally, it is worth noting, the Marine Corps is on pace to reach an active duty end strength of 202,000 by the end of Fiscal Year 2009, which will enable the Marine Corps to refocus the Reserve recruiting and retention efforts to achieve the expected percentage of authorized

Selected Marine Corps Reserve Component end strength. The bonuses and incentives for recruiting and retention provided by the Congress are essential tools for helping us accomplish this goal and I thank you for your continued support.

RECRUITING

The Marine Corps is unique in that all recruiting efforts (officer, enlisted, regular, Reserve, and prior-service) fall under the direction of the Marine Corps Recruiting Command. Operationally, this provides the Marine Corps with tremendous flexibility and unity of command in order to annually meet Total Force Marine Corps objectives.

Like the Active Component, Marine Corps Reserve units primarily rely upon a first term enlisted force. Currently, the Marine Corps Reserve continues to recruit and retain quality men and women willing to manage commitments to their families, their communities, their civilian careers, and their Corps. Despite high operational tempo, the morale and patriotic spirit of Reserve Marines, their families, and employers remains extraordinarily high.

The Marine Corps Recruiting Command achieved 100 percent of its recruiting goal for non-prior service recruiting (5,287) and exceeded its goal for enlisted prior service recruiting (2,672) during Fiscal Year 2007; and achieved 100 percent of its recruiting goal for non-prior service recruiting (4,235) and prior service recruiting (4,501) in Fiscal Year 2008. As of Feb. 1, 2009, 1,756 non-prior service and 1,227 enlisted prior service Marines have been accessed, which reflects 48 percent of the annual enlisted recruiting mission for the Selected Marine Corps Reserve. We fully expect to meet our Selected Marine Corps Reserve recruiting goals again this year.

An initiative implemented during June 2006 at Marine Forces Reserve to enhance recruiting efforts of prior service Marines was the Selected Marine Corps Reserve Affiliation Involuntary Activation Deferment policy. Realizing that deployments take a toll on Active Component Marines, causing some to transition from active duty because of high personnel tempo, we continue to offer this program. This program allows a Marine who has recently deployed an option for a two-year deferment from involuntary activation if they join a Selected Marine Corps Reserve unit after transitioning from active duty. The intent of the two-year involuntary deferment is to allow transitioning Marines the opportunity to participate in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve without sacrificing the ability to build a new civilian career.

Junior officer recruiting and consequently meeting our Reserve company grade requirement remains the most challenging area. Historically, the Active Component Marine Corps has been the source of company grade officers to the Selected Marine Corps Reserve, due to initial active duty contractual requirements of all Reserve-commissioned officers. There are, however, three programs in place now that enable Reserve officer accessions without the typical three to four-year active duty obligation: the Reserve Enlisted Commissioning Program (RECP), the Meritorious Commissioning Program – Reserve (MCP-R) and the Officer Candidate Course – Reserve (OCC-R).

These programs strive to increase the number and quality of company grade officers within deploying Reserve units while addressing our overall shortage of junior officers in our Reserve units. The three programs combined to access 108 Reserve officers during Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008, and are an essential tool to help mitigate company grade officer shortages in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve.

Eligibility for the RECP was expanded to qualified Active Duty enlisted Marines. The MCP-R was established for qualified enlisted Marines, Reserve and Active, who possess an Associates Degree or equivalent number of semester hours. The third program, the OCC-R, has proven to be the most successful as 93 candidates have been commissioned second lieutenants in the Marine Corps Reserve during Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008. We anticipate commissioning between 50 and 75 more second lieutenants through the OCC-R this fiscal year.

The OCC-R focuses on ground-related billets, with an emphasis on ground combat and combat service support within Reserve units that are scheduled for mobilization. The priority to recruit candidates is tied to the Marine Forces Reserve Force Generation Model. Refinement of the OCC-R program to target geographic company grade officer shortfalls is a logical next step.

RETENTION

All subordinate commanders and senior enlisted leaders at each echelon of command are required to retain quality Marines. On a monthly basis, these leaders identify Marines who either have to re-enlist or extend. Identified Marines are counseled concerning the opportunity for their retention in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve.

Enlisted retention trends remain a concern and are being monitored very closely, but were obviously affected by the Active Component 202,000 build. The good news is that the Active Component Marine Corps is no longer making a concerted effort to draw personnel from the Selected Marine Corps Reserve to active duty.

For Fiscal Year 2008, Reserve officer retention remained at the same level as during the previous fiscal year, which was above historic levels.

We continue to offer retention incentives for enlisted Marines in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve, to include the maximum allowable \$15,000 Selected Marine Corps Reserve Affiliation Bonus for an initial three-year commitment. We also offer a \$10,000 Selected Marine Corps Reserve Officer Affiliation Bonus for those officers who affiliate with a Selected Marine Corps Reserve unit and agree to participate for three years. I greatly appreciate the continuance of the increased reenlistment incentive, which was initially provided in the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act.

These incentives are necessary tools to help us retain quality Marines and consequently assist us in achieving an acceptable percentage of authorized Selected Reserve end strength.

I read with interest the Memorandum of July 24, 2008, by Secretary Gates concerning the recommendations of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves. I am pleased to see the strong emphasis on study of the various recommendations that pertain to the Continuum of Service personnel management construct. As the Continuum of Service concept is refined, it should facilitate the affiliation of prior service Marines into the Selected Marine Corps Reserve as well as retain those good Marines already serving.

III. EQUIPMENT

The Marine Corps Reserve, like the Active Component, has two primary equipping priorities: first – equipping individual deploying Marines and sailors, and second - equipping our units to conduct home station training. We will continue to provide every deploying Marine and sailor with the latest generation of individual combat and protective equipment. Our unit equipping efforts include the full complement of equipment to support training efforts across the MAGTF. This complement includes essential communications; crew-served weapon systems such as Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs), Assault Amphibian Vehicles (AAVs), Tanks, and Artillery; ground

mobility; and ground support equipment, which requires continued adequate funding of our Operations and Maintenance accounts. Your continued support in this area has enabled us to adequately sustain home station training and pre-deployment operations.

As with all we do, our focus will continue to be on the individual Marine and sailor. Ongoing efforts to equip and train this most valued resource have resulted in obtaining the latest generation individual combat and protective equipment: M16A4 service rifles, M4 carbines, Rifle Combat Optic scopes, improved helmet pad suspension systems, enhanced Small Arms Protective Insert plates, Modular Tactical Vests, and the latest generation AN/PVS-14 Night Vision Devices, to name a few. Every member of Marine Forces Reserve has deployed fully equipped with the most current authorized Individual Combat Clothing and Equipment to include Personal Protective Equipment.

Marine Forces Reserve's unit equipping priority is to obtain the principal end items necessary to establish or replenish the appropriate inventory of equipment to the level dictated by our Training Allowance (TA). Training Allowance is the amount of equipment needed by each unit to conduct home station training. Our Reserve units should train with the equipment necessary for Marine Forces Reserve to effectively augment and reinforce the Active Component.

Currently, our equipping focus is on mitigating the short-term impact of reduced supply of certain principal end items, e.g.; seven LAV variants, Digital Terrain Analysis Mapping Systems, and the Theater Provide Equipment Sensors. We employ adaptive resourcing and training management approaches to ensure our Reserve units can adequately train. The inherent latency in procurement timelines and competing priorities for resources continue to challenge the training and equipping of our Operational Reserve. Since the Marine Corps procures and fields equipment as a Total Force, equipment modernization efforts of the Marine Corps Reserve are synchronized with the efforts of the Active Component. The approved 37.3 million dollars Fiscal Year 2009 NGREA will provide Marine Forces Reserve the funds to procure much needed Tactical Laptop Computer Packages (Ruggedized Laptops and General Purpose Laptops), Supporting Arms upgrade to Digital Virtual Training Environment (DVTE), Bright Star FLIR, Light Armored Vehicle 25 A2 Variant (LAV-25A2), and a Tactical Remote Sensor Suite (TRSS).

To maintain an inventory of current equipment necessary to conduct home station training, Marine Forces Reserves utilizes several resources and programs. Routine preventive and

corrective maintenance are still performed throughout the country by our Marines. However, ground equipment maintenance efforts have expanded over the past few years, leveraging contracted services and depot-level capabilities. Marine Corps Logistics Command (LOGCOM), through mobile maintenance teams, provides preventive and corrective maintenance support to our Reserve units. Marine Forces Reserve is actively involved in the Marine Corps Depot Level Maintenance Program (DLMP) to support the continued operation of principal end items. Marine Corps Logistics Command continues to uniquely provide Marine Forces Reserve a “Repair and Return” (R&R) program which enables us to request additional maintenance support when requirements exceed the Marine Forces Reserve maintenance capacity.

Another key maintenance program utilized by Marine Forces Reserve is the Corrosion Prevention and Control (CPAC) program which extends the useful life of all Marine Corps tactical ground and ground support equipment. This program reduces significant maintenance requirements and associated costs due to corrosion through the application of corrosion-resistant compounds, establishing environmentally-safe wash-down racks, and providing climate controlled storage. Additionally, the program identifies, classifies, and effects repair, or recommends replacement of equipment that has already succumbed to the elements.

Marine Corps Reserve ground equipment readiness rates are currently above 90 percent (Maintenance-97% and Supply-92% as of March 9, 2009), based on our Reserve equipment Training Allowance. The Marine Corps Reserve equipment investment overseas MAGTF operations since 2004 is approximately five percent of our overall equipment and includes various communications, motor transport, engineer, and ordnance equipment, as well as several modern weapons systems such as the new HIMARS artillery system and the latest generation Light Armored Vehicle. This investment has presented challenges for our home station training requirements yet greatly adds to the war fighting capability of the Marine Corps. Deliberate planning at the Service level is currently underway to reset the Total Force, to include resourcing the Reserve equipment. This resourcing will enable the Marine Corps Reserve to remain ready, relevant, and responsive to the demands of our Corps.

Marine Corps Reserve equipment requirements are captured as part of Marine Corps Total Force submissions. Priority Reserve equipment requirements that cannot be timely met with these vehicles are identified in the Commandant’s Unfunded Programs List and/or my NGREA Request.

We especially appreciate Congress' support of the Marine Corps Reserve through NGREA. It would be impossible for me to overstate the importance of NGREA and in particular, the consistency of these appropriations. Since 2002, NGREA has provided more than 240 million dollars for equipment procurements. The stability of NGREA funding has significantly increased our ability to forecast meeting priority equipment requirements. The NGREA provides immediate flexibility, allowing procurement of items necessary to meet specific combat capability, training, and support requirements.

In the last three years, we have been able to close the gap on combat equipment requirements necessary to effectively train our Marines and sailors. Examples of high-priority combat equipment purchases we have made or will make through Fiscal Years 2007, 2008 and 2009 NGREA funding are: the LITENING II Targeting Pod; the AN/ARC-210 (V) Multi-Modal Radio system for our KC-130 aircraft; the UC-12+ aircraft; multiple C2 systems component; and as previously stated, the BRITE STAR FLIR; the Tactical Remote Sensor System; and the LAV-25A2. Through consistent NGREA funding, we have been able to completely eliminate some deficiencies.

Additionally, with NGREA, we have been able to establish a robust ground combat modeling and simulation program, our NGREA-procured Virtual Combat Convoy Trainers (VCCTs), Combat Vehicle Training Simulators (CVTSs), Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement – Training Systems (MTVR-TS), HMMWV Egress Trainer, and Digital Virtual Training Environments (DVTEs) enable us to overcome many resource and time-related challenges while increasing the individual and unit's combat readiness. Our Fiscal Year 2009 NGREA plan includes Supporting Arms-Helmet Mounted Displays (SA-HMDs) for our DVTEs, giving our Marines the ability to enhance Forward Air Control and Indirect Fire Control proficiency without leaving the Reserve Training Center. It is accurate to say that we could not have provided some critical capabilities without these NGREA funds.

IV. TRAINING

The collective lessons wrought from our unit and individual combat experiences, Theater Security Cooperation Exercises and other Active Component operational tempo relief deployments have helped improve nearly all facets of our current Reserve Component training. In this regard, one of the most exciting areas where we are continuing to transform the depth and scope of our training remains the cutting-edge arena of Modeling and Simulations Technology.

Rapid advancement in modeling and simulation software, hardware and network technologies are providing new and increasingly realistic training capabilities. Marine Forces Reserve is training with and continuing to field several complex digital video-based training systems which literally immerse our Reserve Component Marines into “virtual” combat environments, complete with the sights, sounds and chaos of today’s battlefield environment in any clime or place, day or night, spanning the full continuum of warfare from high-intensity conventional warfare to low-intensity urban conflict.

One new capability that we are fielding to support our Reserve Marines is the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer-XP. This interactive audio/video weapons simulator provides enhanced marksmanship, weapons employment and tactical decision making training for a variety of small arms. The system consists of infantry weapons instrumented with lasers that enable Marines to simulate engaging multiple target types.

Another system addressed in last year’s testimony that continues to prove invaluable in the pre-deployment training of our tactical drivers is the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer-Reconfigurable Vehicle System. This is an advanced, full-scale vehicle simulator that trains Marines in both basic and advanced combat convoy skills using variable terrain and roads in a variety of weather, visibility and vehicle conditions. The simulator is a mobile, trailer-configured platform that utilizes a HMMWV mock-up, small arms, crew-served weapons, 360-degree visual display with after-action review/instant replay capability. Marine Forces Reserve was the lead agency for initial procurement, training and evaluation of this revolutionary training system, which is now being used throughout the Marine Corps. We are now preparing to accept the fourth generation of this invaluable training system at Camp Wilson aboard the Marine Air Ground Combat Center in Twenty Nine Palms, Calif. Upon installation, student throughput capability for combat convoy training will double.

It is important to recognize the key role that Congress has played in the fielding of all four generations of the VCCT. Procurement of the VCCT resulted directly from NGRE. Of all the training packages our deploying units complete, returning combat veterans have consistently praised the invaluable benefits of having had the opportunity to train in tactics, techniques and procedures using this advanced simulation system..

Beginning this summer, Marine Forces Reserve will field the newly developed Deployable Virtual Training Environment (DVTE). This advanced, first-person, immersive, simulation-based

training system, made up of 16 laptops and peripherals packaged in ruggedized deployable cases, is capable of emulating and simulating a wide variety of weapons systems and generating hi-fidelity, relevant terrain databases. The DVTE also provides small-unit echelons with the opportunity to continuously review and rehearse Command and Control procedures and battlefield concepts in a virtual environment. The system consists of two components, the Combined Arms Network, which provides integrated first person combat skills, and Tactical Decision Simulations, which provides individual, fire team, squad and platoon-level training associated with patrolling, ambushes and convoy operations. Additional features include combat engineer training, small-unit tactics training, tactical foreign language training and event-driven, ethics-based, decision-making training.

One of our newest and rapidly advancing training initiatives involves the collocation of a select number of the previously cited training systems aboard Camp Upshur at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. Our intent is to provide an advanced, unit-level training capability within easy access of the I-95 corridor. When fully established this summer, the Camp Upshur training capabilities will include eight mobile VCCT trailers, two mobile HMMWV egress trainers, a mobile multi-platform tactical vehicle operator simulation system, three Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainers that are networked for combined arms training, and 80 DVTE terminals. These resources, in combination with the billeting, training ranges and facilities available aboard MCB Quantico, will provide the opportunity for reinforced battalions to conduct training and force-on-force exercises using combinations of live, virtual and constructive training systems and resources. This initiative provides state of the art training support to units while revitalizing long-established Camp Upshur into a cost effective, vital and dynamic training resource for Marine Forces Reserve and other agencies. In addition to facilitating training at Camp Upshur, the numerous mobile training systems will remain available for movement and redeployment anywhere in the lower 48 states in support of training Reserve Marines.

All of these advanced training systems have been rapidly acquired and fielded with vital Supplemental and NGRE funding. These critical funding resources are not only providing a near-term training capability in support of combat deployments, but are also providing a solid foundation for the transformation of our training environment from legacy static training methods to more realistic virtual combat training environments designed to prepare our Marines and sailors to succeed on future battlefields.

V. FACILITIES

Marine Forces Reserve is comprised of 185 locations in 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. These facilities are comprised of 32 owned and 153 tenant locations. In contrast to Active Duty installations that are normally closed to the general public, our Reserve sites are openly located within civilian communities. This arrangement requires close partnering with state and local entities nationwide. Thus, the condition and appearance of our facilities may directly influence the American people's perception of the Marine Corps and the Armed Forces as well as possibly impacting our recruiting and retention efforts.

Marine Forces Reserve Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (FSRM) program funding levels continue to address immediate maintenance requirements and longer-term improvements to our older facilities. Sustainment funding has allowed us to maintain our current level of facility readiness without further facility degradation. Your continued support for both the Military Construction Navy Reserve (MCNR) program and a strong FSRM program are essential to addressing the aging infrastructure of the Marine Corps Reserve. With more than 57 percent of our Reserve Centers being more than 30 years old and 44 percent being more than 50 years old, the continued need for support of both MCNR and FSRM cannot be overstated.

The Base Realignment & Closure (BRAC) 2005 continues to move forward and the Marine Corps Reserve will begin relocating many Reserve units to new consolidated Reserve centers during Fiscal Year 2009. Like other BRAC Business Plans, the Marine Corps Reserve BRAC program is tightly linked to other service's business plans for our shared reserve centers. Of the 25 BRAC actions for the Marine Corps Reserve, 21 are in conjunction with Army and Navy military construction projects.

In September 2008, the Department of the Navy and the State of Louisiana signed a lease for a new Federal City in New Orleans, which will provide a new headquarters compound for Marine Forces Reserve. The state of Louisiana is providing construction dollars for the new headquarters facility and saving the federal government more than 130 million dollars.

Our Marine Forces Reserve Environmental Program promotes accepted stewardship principles as well as compliance with all regulatory requirements in support of training both on site and outside the fence line. We employ the Environmental Management System (EMS), which uses a systematic approach ensuring that environmental activities are well managed and continuously

improving. Additionally, Marine Forces Reserve has initiated a nationwide program to reduce waste production and ensure proper disposal at our centers. We have also executed several major projects to protect the nation's waterways near our Reserve centers.

VI. HEALTH SERVICES

Military healthcare support (medical prevention and treatment) programs have grown exponentially over the past few years – Fiscal Year 2008 being one of the most significant. A myriad of programs are now provided to our Marines, sailors, and their families during pre-deployment, deployment and post deployment.

Our Health Services priorities are: 1) maximize education and awareness of TRICARE support for Reservists; 2) attain DOD/ DON Individual Medical Readiness (IMR) goals; and 3) ensure general awareness of all health service programs in support of our service members.

TRICARE remains the foundation of our medical support programs, providing the full spectrum of medical, dental and behavioral health services. As a result of the 2009 Defense Authorization Act analysis of TRICARE Reserve Select costs, monthly premiums for TRICARE Reserve Select dropped by 42 percent for individual coverage and by 29 percent for family coverage on Jan. 1, 2009. Reservists now pay \$47.51 a month for single coverage, down from \$81, while the cost for families is down from \$253 to \$180.17 a month. Reservists and their family members are eligible for different TRICARE benefits depending on their status: as a member of the Select Reserve, a Reservist may qualify for and purchase TRICARE Reserve Select; on military duty for 30 days or less a Reservist is covered under Line of Duty care; when activated he and his family are covered by TRICARE Prime; and when deactivated a Reservist is eligible for transitional health plan options.

All deploying service members are now required to complete a Baseline Pre-Deployment Neuro-Cognitive Functional Assessment. The tool used to complete this assessment is called the Automated Neuro-Psychological Assessment Metric (ANAM). Results from the ANAM will assist leaders and medical providers with evaluating service members who screen positive and require necessary medical treatment. The intent is that ANAM results and implementation of the Psychological Health Outreach Program will provide standardized guidance for providers who follow up on identified issues and concerns from results of the Post-Deployment Health

Assessments, to include development of protocols and creation and implementation of an information/benefits tracking system. Our Commanders and staff are coordinating with the Navy's Bureau of Medicine (BUMED) in order to ensure that deploying Marines and sailors are properly evaluated prior to deployment.

Efforts to assess health post deployment have also increased significantly over the past year. In addition to completing a Post Deployment Health Assessment prior to returning to the United States, our Marines and sailors now complete a Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) three to six months after returning from deployment. The PDHRA is crucial in identifying and addressing health concerns with specific emphasis on mental health issues which may have emerged since returning from deployment. Active tracking of this process ensures that we meet the post-deployment health care needs of our Marines and sailors.

The Psychological Health Outreach Program, introduced by BUMED, is another specialty program which addresses post deployment behavioral health concerns. This program is designed to provide early identification and clinical assessment of our Reserve Marines and sailors who return from deployment at risk for not having stress-related injuries identified and treated in an expeditious manner. This program, funded by supplemental Defense Health Program appropriations, provides outreach and educational activities to improve the overall psychological health of our Reservists and identifies long-term strategies to improve psychological health support services for the Reserve community. We are currently developing our concept and implementation strategy to best support the Force.

Individual medical and dental readiness for our Marines and sailors remains a top priority. To improve current readiness of our Reservists, which is 64% and 73% as of March 1, 2009 respectively, we continue to utilize the Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP). This program funds medical and dental contracted specialists to provide health care services to units specifically to increase individual medical and dental readiness. During Fiscal Year 2008, this service provided more than 3,020 Preventive Health Assessments; 4,013 Dental examinations, 402 Dental Panoramic x-rays; 529 Blood Draws; 803 Immunizations; and 3,149 PDHRAs for our Marines and sailors.

The Armed Forces Health Longitudinal Technology Application (AHLTA), which provides electronic health records for the entire U.S. Armed Forces, is currently being rolled out to all Reserve Components to include Marine Forces Reserve. The transition to electronic medical

records will enable optimal health services to our Marines and sailors with the end result being increased individual and unit medical readiness.

VII. QUALITY OF LIFE

We continue to aggressively institute new Family Readiness Programs, revitalize services, and proactively reach out to our Reservists and their families to ensure our programs and services meet the needs and expectations of our Marines and their families.

As part of widespread Marine Corps reforms to enhance family support, we are placing full-time Family Readiness Officers (FROs), staffed by either civilians or Active Duty Marines, at the battalion/squadron level and above to support the Commander's family readiness mission. Modern communication technologies, procedures and processes are being expanded to better inform and empower family members including spouses, children and parents of single Marines.

The Marine Forces Reserve Lifelong Learning Program continues to provide educational information to service members, families, retirees, and civilian employees. More than 1,200 Marine Forces Reserve personnel (Active and Reserve) enjoyed the benefit of Tuition Assistance, utilizing more than 2.4 million dollars that funded more than 4,000 courses during Fiscal Year 2008. Tuition Assistance greatly eases the financial burden of education for our service members while enabling them to maintain progress toward their education goals.

The Marine Corps' partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) and the National Association for Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) continues to provide a great resource for service members and their families in selecting child care, before, during, and after a deployment in support of overseas contingency operations. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America provide outstanding programs for our Reserve Marines' children between the ages of six and 18 after school and on the weekends. Under our agreement with BGCA, Reserve families can participate in more than 40 programs at no cost. With NACCRRA, we help families of our Reservists locate affordable child care that is comparable to high-quality, on-base, military-operated programs. The NACCRRA provides child care subsidies at quality child care providers for our Reservists who are deployed in support of overseas contingency operations and for those Active Duty Marines who are stationed in regions that are geographically separated from military installations. We also partnered with the Early Head Start National Resource Center Zero to Three

to expand services for family members of our Reservists who reside in isolated and geographically-separated areas. Additionally, our Marine families (on active duty 30 or more days) enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program are offered up to 40 hours of free respite care per month for each exceptional family member. This allows our families the comfort that their family member will be taken care of when they are in need of assistance.

We fully recognize the strategic role our families have in mission readiness, particularly mobilization preparedness. We prepare our families for day-to-day military life and the deployment cycle (Pre-Deployment, Deployment, Post-Deployment, and Follow-On) by providing educational opportunities at unit Family Days, Pre-Deployment Briefs, Return and Reunion Briefs, and Post-Deployment Briefs. This is accomplished through unit level Family Readiness programs that are the responsibility of the Commanding Officer managed by the full-time, non-deploying FRO and supported by trained volunteers and Force level programs such as Lifestyle Insights, Networking, Knowledge, and Skills (L.I.N.K.S.).

Every Marine Corps Reserve unit throughout the country has a Family Readiness program that serves as the link between the command and family members - providing official communication, information, and referrals. The FRO proactively educates families on the military lifestyle and benefits, provides answers for individual questions and areas of concerns, and enhances the sense of community and camaraderie within the unit. The L.I.N.K.S. program is a training and mentoring program designed by Marine spouses to help new spouses thrive in the military lifestyle and adapt to challenges – including those brought about by deployments. This program has recently been expanded to support the extended family of a Marine - children and parents. Online and CD-ROM versions of L.I.N.K.S make this valuable tool more readily accessible to families of Reserve Marines who are not located near Marine Corps installations.

To better prepare our Marines and their families for activation, Marine Forces Reserve is fully engaged with OSD to implement the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, much of which we have had in place for quite some time. We continue to implement an interactive approach that provides numerous resources and services throughout the deployment cycle. Available resources include, but are not limited to, family-related publications, online volunteer training opportunities, and a family readiness/mobilization support toll free number. Family readiness educational materials have been updated to reflect the current deployment environment. Specifically, deployment guide templates that are easily adapted to be unit-specific were distributed to unit

commanders and family readiness personnel, as well as Marine Corps families, and are currently available on our Web site. Services such as pastoral care, Military OneSource, and various mental health services are readily available to our Reserve Marines' families. Also, through the DoD contract with the Armed Services YMCA, the families of our deployed Reserve Marines are enjoying complimentary fitness memberships at participating YMCA's throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Our Active Duty Marines and their families located at Independent Duty Stations have the ability to access these services as well.

Managed Health Network (MHN) is an OSD-contracted support resource that provides surge augmentation counselors for our base counseling centers and primary support at sites around the country to address catastrophic requirements. This unique program is designed to bring counselors on-site at Reserve Training Centers to support all phases of the deployment cycle. Marine Forces Reserve has incorporated this resource into post-demobilization drill periods, Family Days, Pre-Deployment Briefs, and Return & Reunion Briefs. Follow-up services are scheduled after Marines return from combat at various intervals to facilitate on-site individual and group counseling. Additionally, we are utilizing these counselors to conduct post-demobilization telephonic contact with IRR Marines in order to assess their needs and connect them to services.

The Peacetime/Wartime Support Team and the support structure within the Inspector-Instructor staffs at our Reserve sites provides families of activated and deployed Marines with assistance in developing proactive, prevention-oriented steps such as family care plans, powers of attorney, family financial planning, and enrollment in the Dependent Eligibility and Enrollment Reporting System. During their homecoming, our Marines who have deployed consistently cite the positive importance of family support programs.

To strengthen family support programs, we will continue to enhance, market, and sustain outreach capabilities. The current OSD-level oversight, sponsorship, and funding of family support programs properly corresponds to current requirements. We are particularly supportive of Military OneSource, which provides our Reservists and their families with an around-the-clock information and referral service via toll-free telephone and Internet access on a variety of subjects such as parenting, childcare, education, finances, legal issues, elder care, health, wellness, deployment, crisis support, and relocation.

Marines and their families, who sacrifice so much for our Nation's defense, should not be asked to sacrifice quality of life. We will continue to be a forceful advocate for these programs and

services. We will continue to evolve and adapt to the changing needs and environments in order to ensure that quality support programs and services are provided to our Marines and their families.

VIII. CASUALTY ASSISTANCE AND MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

One of the most significant responsibilities of the Reserve site support staff is that of casualty assistance. It is at the darkest hour for our Marine families that our support is most needed. By virtue of our dispersed composition, Marine Forces Reserve site support staffs are uniquely positioned to accomplish the vast majority of all Marine Corps casualty notifications and are trained to provide assistance to the family. Historically, Marine Forces Reserve personnel have been involved in approximately 90% of all notifications and follow-on assistance to the next of kin. There is no duty to our families that we treat with more importance, and the responsibilities of our Casualty Assistance Officers continue well beyond notification. We ensure that our Casualty Assistance Officers are adequately trained, equipped, and supported by all levels of command. Once a Casualty Assistance Officer is designated, he or she assists the family members in every possible way, from planning the return and final rest of their Marine to counseling them on benefits and entitlements to providing a strong shoulder to lean on when needed. The Casualty Assistance Officer is the family's central point of contact and support; available to serve as a representative or liaison with the media, funeral home, government agencies, or any other agency that may become involved.

Additionally, Marine Forces Reserve units provide significant support for military funeral honors for our veterans. The active duty site support staff members, with augmentation from their Reserve Marines, performed more than 12,000 military funeral honors in 2008 (91% of the Marine Corps total) and we anticipate supporting nearly 13,000 during 2009. The authorization and funding to bring Reserve Marines on active duty to assist in the performance of military funeral honors has greatly assisted us at sites such as Bridgeton, Mo., Chicago, and Ft. Devens, Mass., where we frequently perform more than ten funerals each week. As with Casualty Assistance, we place enormous emphasis on providing military funeral honor support.

IX. CONCLUSION

The Marine Corps Reserve – your Operational Reserve - continues to shoulder the war fighting burden with our Active Component counterparts. Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, as well as support to Combatant Commanders' Theater Support Cooperation Exercises, have required continuous activations of Selected Marine Corps Reserve forces. We will continue to focus upon the future challenges to the Total Force and corresponding requirements of modernization, training and personnel readiness to ensure that the Marine Corps Reserve remains on equal footing with our Active Component. Your consistent and steadfast support of our Marines, sailors and their families directly contributes to our ability to do so. Semper Fidelis!